

COMMUNITY DIAL OFFICE CALLS

This section describes broadly the practices to be followed by operators at the operator office on calls to and from an office having the physical equipment located in a separate exchange area but with the operating and maintenance forces located elsewhere. It contemplates that adequate bulletin information will be provided so that the general directions herein can be adapted specifically to each office.

1. General. When trunks from a community dial office terminate on your position, you will serve not only as the special service operator for the customers in the community dial office, but as the incoming or "B" operator on calls from points that can not dial the community dial office direct.

As the assistance operator, you should be reasonably familiar with the geography, nature, habits, and customs of the area served, with the officials and institutions, and special arrangements for providing various services. To achieve the desired satisfactory service in this respect, you are expected not only to make free use of the bulletin but to utilize your own knowledge and experience to handle requests which are of a somewhat more intimate or personal nature than is generally encountered at "A" boards. Consider yourself as the operator for the area in which the community dial office is located, and in so far as you are permitted, handle calls as though you were located at a switchboard in the area itself.

As the inward operator on calls to the place in question, you are expected not only to establish connection but to take certain other steps because of the nature of the called office.

In general, other sections of the practice apply to the various types of calls which you will encounter and in those sections most of the differences due to the fact that a community dial office is involved are provided for. The following points are given as modifications of the practices in general or for the sake of emphasis.

2. Requests for assistance from community dial office customers. In general, handle requests for assistance as provided in other sections for the request involved. In certain cases, however, modifications of this general practice are required, and in such instances the following exceptions apply, as authorized for the office involved.

a. If you are directed to tell the customer that he can dial the call himself when he requests connection to another number in the same office or in other cases locally specified, do so in phrases such as those given below, but if he then indicates that he has had difficulty, if he indicates some physical condition preventing his dialing, or if he initially states that he has already tried a call, at once acknowledge and attempt to establish connection.

"You can call Beacon numbers direct."

"Just dial 8 and then 5678," or **"Just dial 8 and listen for dial tone again. Then dial 5678,"**
depending on which phrase applies.

"You can reach 2-1234 by dialing those numbers."

b. If you are locally directed not to complete calls in the same community dial office except in the case of emergency calls and the calling party asks you to do so, tell him as in "a" that he can dial the number himself, except in the following cases.

(1) If the calling party indicates repeated delay due to a busy or don't answer condition, advise him that you will call him when the line is available. Then try the called number at frequent intervals

May 1, 1940.

COMMUNITY DIAL OFFICE CALLS—Continued

2. Continued

and when you reach it, inform the party who answers that another number was trying to reach him and that you will have them call him. When he hangs up, disconnect, reach the calling station, and report that the calling party may now reach the called station if he will call it. If, however, designated codes are provided for reverting calls in the office involved, check to make sure that the calling and called numbers are not on the same line. If they are, reach the calling party and explain how he can make the call.

- (2) If the calling party indicates some physical condition that prevents his dialing, say that you will have the called party call him. Then reach the called station and deliver the request, as, for example, "Mrs. Jones wishes to give an order. Can you have a clerk call her on 1234?"
- (3) If the calling party reports a service difficulty such as a wrong number or cut-off, say "If you will try them now, perhaps you can get them," or if he indicates that he has already tried or asks you to try, say "All right, sir. I'll call you when I get them," and proceed as in "(1)."

3. **Giving instructions on how to make certain types of calls.** Be thoroughly familiar with routings from community dial stations, so that you may inform the customer at such a station how any call he wishes to make is routed, such as the following:

- Dialing a number in a near-by office.
- Dialing to reach the operator at a near-by free service point.
- Dialing to reach the business office or the local "service" number.
- Dialing for the police, fire, etc.
- Dialing numbers in the operator office if this applies.
- Dialing reverting calls.
- Dialing Information or Repair Service.

4. **Use of ringing key.** If you ring manually on some of the connections on your position, designate connections to community dial offices as specified locally so that you will not ring on them, as doing so may break down the connection.

5. **Listening for ringing signal.** Be guided by your knowledge of the length of the ringing cycle in the called office in determining whether or not the ringing signal is present. If you do not hear the ringing signal, change the connection, and if you still do not receive a signal within a reasonable interval, check the status of the called number as in "6" and give a suitable report if it is not working. If the check reveals that the called number is a working station, consider the absence of the ringing signal as an alarm, and proceed accordingly.

6. Slow answer calls.

a. In general give preliminary reports and slow answer reports as follows.

- (1) If you received the order from a customer, give reports in the regular way as in Section 8.
- (2) If you received the order from an operator over a ringdown trunk, give them as for a ringdown operator in Division C.
- (3) If you received the order from an operator over a trunk returning switchhook supervision to the calling operator, do not give reports unless locally directed to do so.

b. If you have occasion to change connection on a call to a community dial office because you or the calling party questions the don't answer condition, determine if the called number is working by consulting the list of working stations for that office if it is at your position, or by reaching the operator who has

COMMUNITY DIAL OFFICE CALLS—Continued

6. Continued.

the list and asking "Is Beacon 5678 working?" Report the result of your check if the called number is not a working station.

- c. If you have established connection to a community dial station for another operator and she asks you to change connection because of a don't answer condition, asks you to keep ringing when you give a don't answer report, or asks you to verify a don't answer condition, immediately consult the list of working stations and report the result of your check. If, however, you secured the number from your local information records in which disconnects and changes are posted daily, this check is not necessary.

- 7. Request to verify a busy or don't answer condition.** If you do not have "no test" trunks to the community dial office and you have been requested to verify a busy condition, inform the calling operator that you can not verify. If, however, all nonworking or out of order stations in the called office are connected to a busy signal, consult your list of working stations to determine if the called number is vacant or out of order, and report accordingly.

If a don't answer condition is involved, proceed as in "6" before reporting.

- 8. Completing delayed calls.** If you do not have delayed call trunks to the calling community dial office, follow whichever procedure given below applies unless otherwise locally directed for calls on the routes involved.

- a. **Reach Calling Station First.** If you have any means by which you can hold the calling line without ringing, use it. For example, you might hold the calling line on a special service trunk following an initial busy report while you make the first three scheduled attempts. When you are ready to give a report, release any such trunk you may be holding and reach the calling line in the regular way, or complete dialing the number if you have been holding it by dialing all but the last digit.
- b. **Reach Station on Which Last Delay Occurred.** Try to reach the called station, following the regular schedule of attempts until you reach it, then try to reach the calling station. If you are unable to reach it, excuse the call to the called party and then follow the regular procedure for reaching the calling station before again trying to reach the called station. When you reach the calling station, try to secure the called station, and if you are unsuccessful, on the next subsequent attempt try to reach the called station first. Continue this procedure of working in the direction of the last delay first until final disposition.
- c. **Reach Called Station First on Delayed Call Trunk.** When you can reach the called station over a delayed call trunk, reach and hold the called station while you try to reach the calling station.

- 9. Delayed calls from coin lines in certain offices.** If the call is from a prepayment coin line and the toll office has direct trunks to the community dial office, do not offer to complete delayed calls from such stations and do not make subsequent attempts on them. If the calling party asks you to call him say, "Will you call the number a little later, please?" If the calling party insists on being called, refer the case to your supervisor.

SUPERVISOR: Offer to make another attempt to complete the call while the calling party holds the line. If he is still not satisfied, tell him that if he will remain near the telephone you will have Long Distance complete the call for him. If he accepts, pass the details of the call to the Long Distance supervisor and dispose of any ticket written on the call.

May 1, 1940.

COMMUNITY DIAL OFFICE CALLS—Continued

10. **Reverting calls.** When you are informed at the time of the call that the called station is on the same line with the calling station, dial back in the usual way unless a system of reverting call codes has been provided on your bulletin and you have been instructed in their use. In the latter case, inform the calling party that he can call direct and give him the code to use.

11. **Requests from Long Distance.** If Long Distance asks you to hold a line and you do not have delayed call trunks, advise her that you can not hold.

If you receive an order "Collect" and you can determine from your position bulletin whether the called number is a coin line, do so, and if it is, report the fact to Long Distance. If you can not make this check, say "Can't check" and do not establish connection unless subsequently requested to do so.

12. **Telegram calls.** If a number in the community dial office is designated to receive telegrams, be careful to use that number when it applies rather than a number in your own office. Also be careful to distinguish between directions for different offices which may appear at your position.

13. **Calls for intercepted numbers connected to special service trunks.** In some community dial offices, calls for intercepted numbers are connected to a special service trunk and appear at your position as regular calls from that office. You can identify such calls only by the calling party's or operator's remarks when you answer. If such an arrangement applies in offices terminating on your position, be prepared to recognize calls of this type, secure the called number, consult your bulletin for the office, and give the report as though you were an intercepting operator. Do not attempt to complete the connection, but if further attempt is required and you are dealing with a customer ask him to make the call.

14. **Emergency calls.** See Gen. Div., Sec. 3, 9.

15. **Alarm Signals.** When an alarm condition from a community dial office occurs on one of the special service trunks or on an alarm cabinet, follow the directions you have been given for investigating, interpreting, and reporting it immediately. Understand the nature of the alarm signals for each community dial office you serve and be prepared to take the prescribed action.

Where you are directed to dial the alarm checking terminal at specified intervals, do so according to the prescribed schedule and report promptly any alarms you receive. Do not allow the pressure of other work to interfere with this routine.

16. **Reporting trouble.** Follow local directions carefully in handling reports of trouble received from community dial subscribers where such reports are routed differently than similar troubles in your local office.