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**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

William C. Black,)	
)	
	Complainant,)
v.)	<u>Case No. TC-99-534</u>
)	
Southwestern Bell Telephone Company,)	
)	
	Respondent.)

MEDIATION REFERRAL ORDER

On April 26, 1999, William C. Black filed a complaint with the Missouri Public Service Commission against Southwestern Bell Telephone Company (SWBT) regarding a billing disagreement. The Commission issued its Notice of Complaint on May 10, 1999, providing 30 days for SWBT to file an answer, or, in the alternative to file a request for mediation. On June 4, 1999, SWBT filed its Request for Mediation. William C. Black consented to mediation in a letter filed June 21, 1999.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. That this matter is referred to mediation.
2. That initial designated contacts for the mediation and subsequent matters are as follows:

COMPLAINANT:	William C. Black
	264 Braeshire
	St. Louis, Missouri 63021
	314/391-6524

RESPONDENT: Anthony K. Conroy
One Bell Center, Room 3518
St. Louis, Missouri 63101
314/235-2508

MEDIATOR(S): Jim Levin, Director, and [Law Student]
Center for Dispute Resolution
University of Missouri School of Law
206 Hulston Hall
Columbia, Missouri 65211
573/882-1630
573/882-3343 (fax)

COMMISSION: Secretary
Public Service Commission
Post Office Box 360
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0360

3. That the Commission's Records Manager shall mail this Order to each party. The Records Manager shall mail this Order and copies of the Complaint, Respondent's Request for Mediation and Complaint's written consent to mediation to the Mediator.

4. That the Complainant and Respondent shall each individually contact the Mediator within 15 days of the effective date of this Order to obtain instructions from the Mediator, to review the Complaint and to schedule a MEDIATION CONFERENCE. Any mediation conference shall be scheduled in the Commission's offices in Jefferson City, Missouri or the offices of the mediator in Columbia, Missouri, unless the Mediator consents to a different location that is mutually agreed to by the parties.

5. That the process of mediation shall continue until the parties have reached a settlement, until any party is unwilling to proceed further, until the Mediator(s) determines that further efforts would be of no avail, or until the Commission remands this matter from mediation.

6. That the unexcused absence and failure of any party to attend any mediation conference will end the mediation process and cause a mandatory procedural schedule to be set by the Commission. Attendance will only be recognized if the party or representative attending has full authority to negotiate.

7. That the mediation process is voluntary and any party may notify the Secretary of the Commission by letter when the mediation process has ended.

8. That the mediation process is informal and any party may communicate with the Mediator individually without the presence of other parties. Information disclosed to the Mediator, including any settlement offer, is confidential and privileged and will not be disclosed to the Commission.

9. That each party shall advise the Commission in writing of the status of the mediation process by letter not later than the last day of each month beginning with the first full month after the effective date of this Mediation Referral Order.

10. Any proposed full or partial settlement agreement shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Secretary of the Commission for review and approval by the Commission. A settlement may be shielded from disclosure and filing with the Commission if the Commission is notified in writing that a settlement has been reached and the case is voluntarily dismissed.

11. This order shall become effective on October 5, 1999.

BY THE COMMISSION



Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

(S E A L)

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,
on this 23rd day of September, 1999.

Thornburg, Regulatory Law Judge

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SEP 24 1999
COMMISSION COUNSEL
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION