



The State's Cable Franchise Legislation and Executive Order

A new way of offering cable TV service in New Jersey's communities started in 2006 following the approval of legislation that authorized state-wide cable franchises.

Under the new law, any company interested in providing service no longer has to negotiate a contract with each town. Instead, a company can now offer service throughout New Jersey if they file for a statewide franchise.

Currently, Verizon is rolling out service in various towns across New Jersey under its state-wide cable franchise. Other companies may follow suit.

The legislation **CABLE FRANCHISE** was signed by Governor Jon S. Corzine who also issued an executive order **EXECUTIVE ORDER #25** that directs the Department of the Public Advocate to monitor and enforce the new law, and the Board of Public Utilities to issue regulations.

The Public Advocate's Division of Rate Counsel participates in numerous utility policy making groups and represents consumers in setting telecommunications and cable TV policy that will affect the provision of services.

The division plays an active role in ensuring that consumers' interest are protected and that service is delivered without discrimination against any group of subscribers.

Under the Executive Order, Public Advocate Ronald Chen is tasked with monitoring "the build-out of the new statewide cable franchises." The department can bring appropriate enforcement actions to protect the rights of all citizens, and especially residents of apartment buildings and other multi-family units, and to ensure they receive appropriate coverage and service.