



PUBLIC NOTICE

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DA 12-1057
Released: July 3, 2012

EFFECTIVE DATE ANNOUNCED FOR ONLINE PUBLICATION OF BROADCAST TELEVISION PUBLIC INSPECTION FILES

MM Docket No. 00-168; MM Docket No. 00-44

The Federal Communications Commission has established an effective date for the new requirement that television broadcasters' public inspection files be available through a Commission-hosted online website. Today, the Commission published in the Federal Register notification that the Office of Management and Budget has approved the Commission's Paperwork Reduction Act submission associated with the Order adopting the new online requirement. The effective date of the new requirement is 30 days from publication of the notice in the Federal Register, or August 2, 2012.

The Commission adopted the new online public inspection file requirement in a Report and Order adopted on April 27, 2012. Previously, broadcasters kept their "public files" on paper as part of their obligation to disclose community-relevant documents. The public has been able to review these documents only by visiting broadcast stations and asking to see the public file. The Commission's Order updates the existing disclosure procedures to move the public file from paper to the Internet.

Specifically, the Order requires television stations to post their public files online in a central, Commission-hosted online database rather than maintaining paper files locally at their main studios. The Order modernizes the filing process, making it easier for consumers to access information about their broadcast services without having to travel to the station's main studio.

On and after August 2, 2012, broadcasters will post to the online public file any new documents that they determine must be placed in the public file. Broadcasters will have six months after August 2, 2012 to post existing documents that were part of the public file prior to August 2, except in the case of the political file. With respect to the political file only, broadcasters are not required to upload any such documents that were part of their public file prior to August 2 -- only new political file documents must be uploaded. In addition, small broadcasters -- those that are not affiliated with the top four networks in the top 50 markets -- are not required to post their political file documents to their online public file until July 1, 2014.

The Commission will soon schedule user testing and educational webinars for the online public file to ensure that the uploading of materials by broadcasters can be conducted smoothly and efficiently.

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