



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

DA 13-2189

Released: November 14, 2013

THE CONSUMER AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS BUREAU SEEKS COMMENT ON THE COMMISSION'S POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

CG Docket No. 10-162

PLEADING CYCLE ESTABLISHED

Comments Due: December 2, 2013

The Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (Bureau) hereby initiates a review of the Commission's policies and practices under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).¹ Section 504 requires federal agencies to make their programs and activities accessible to people with disabilities. Pursuant to Section 1.1810 of the Commission's rules, this *Notice* seeks comment on the accessibility of the Commission's programs and activities.²

The Commission's rules mandate that it conduct a review of its current Section 504 policies and practices in view of advances in relevant technology and achievability, and that it update its *Section 504 Handbook*, every three years.³ The *Section 504 Handbook* contains guidance on the provision of accommodations for Commission programs and activities, procedures for acquiring reasonable accommodations, and information about disabilities and accessibility.

The Bureau seeks comment on the overall accessibility of the Commission's activities and programs. Overall accessibility includes, but is not limited to, the availability of sign language interpreters, physically accessible buildings and meeting spaces, accessible format documents, assistive listening devices, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), captioning, and other forms of reasonable accommodation needed for access to Commission programs and activities.⁴

¹ See 29 U.S.C. § 794.

² 47 C.F.R. § 1.1810.

³ See 47 C.F.R. § 1.1805; Federal Communications Commission Section 504 Programs & Activities Accessibility Handbook (Section 504 Handbook). The Section 504 Handbook is available in Word, PDF, Text, HTML and Braille at <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/section-504-handbook>.

⁴ See *Section 504 Handbook* at 2-3.

Pursuant to Sections 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 1.415, 1.419, interested parties may file comments on or before **December 2, 2013**. All comments must reference **CG Docket No. 10-162**. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121 (1998).

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs2/>.
- Paper Filers: Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number.

Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.

- All hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary must be delivered to FCC Headquarters at 445 12th St., SW, Room TW-A325, Washington, DC 20554. The filing hours are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes and boxes must be disposed of before entering the building.
- Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743.
- U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW, Washington DC 20554.

A copy of this *Notice* and any subsequently filed documents in this matter will be available during regular business hours at the FCC Reference Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW, Room CY-A257, Washington, D.C. 20554, (202) 418-0270. This *Notice* and any subsequently filed documents in this matter may also be purchased from the Commission's duplicating contractor at its website, www.bcpiweb.com, or call 1-800-378-3160. A copy of this *Notice* and any subsequently filed documents may also be found by searching on ECFS (insert **CG Docket No. 10-162** into the Proceeding block).

People with Disabilities: To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0530 (voice), (202) 418-0432 (TTY).

For further information, please contact Cheryl King, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Disability Rights Office, at (202) 418-2284(voice) or e-mail at Cheryl.King@fcc.gov.

Appendix A

47 C.F.R. § 1.1810. Review of Compliance.

(a) The Commission shall, beginning in 2004 and at least every three years thereafter, review its current policies and practices in view of advances in relevant technology and achievability. Based on this review, the Commission shall modify its practices and procedures to ensure that the Commission's programs and activities are fully accessible.

(b) The Commission shall provide an opportunity to interested persons, including individuals with disabilities or organizations representing individuals with disabilities, to participate in the review process by submitting comments. Written comments shall be signed by the commenter or by someone authorized to do so on his or her behalf. The signature of the commenter, or signature of someone authorized by the commenter to do so on his or her behalf, shall be provided on print comments. Comments in audio, Braille, electronic, and/or video formats shall contain an affirmative identity statement of the individual, which for this purpose shall be considered to be functionally equivalent to a commenter's signature.

(c) The Commission shall maintain on file and make available for public inspection for four years following completion of the compliance review –

- (1) A description of areas examined and problems identified;
- (2) All comments and complaints filed regarding the Commission's compliance; and
- (3) A description of any modifications made.

Appendix B

47 C.F.R. § 1.1805. Federal Communications Commission Section 504 Programs and Activities Accessibility Handbook.

The Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau shall publish a “Federal Communications Commission Section 504 Programs and Activities Accessibility Handbook”(“Section 504 Handbook”) for Commission staff, and shall update the Section 504 Handbook as necessary and at least every three years. The Section 504 handbook shall be available to the public in hard copy upon request and electronically on the website. The Section 504 Handbook shall contain procedures for releasing documents, holding meeting, receiving comments, and for other aspects of Commission programs and activities to achieve accessibility. These procedures will ensure that the Commission presents a consistent and complete accommodation policy pursuant to 29 U.S.C. 794, as amended. The Section 504 Handbook is for internal staff use and public information only, and is not intended to create any rights, responsibilities, or independent cause of action against the Federal Government.