



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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**DA 18-135**

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## **MEDIA BUREAU REMINDS RADIO BROADCASTERS AND CABLE OPERATORS OF MARCH 1, 2018 ONLINE PUBLIC FILE DEADLINE**

### **MB Docket No. 14-127**

In the *Expanded Online Public File Order*, adopted January 28, 2016, the Commission expanded to broadcast and satellite radio licensees, cable operators, and DBS providers the requirement that public inspection files be posted to the Commission's online public file database.<sup>1</sup> The *Order* set varying deadlines for these entities to use the online public file. As explained below, this Public Notice is a reminder of the March 1, 2018 deadline applicable to certain broadcast radio licensees and small cable operators.

Commercial radio stations in the top 50 Nielsen Audio radio markets with five or more full-time employees were required to commence using the online public file database on June 24, 2016.<sup>2</sup> All other radio broadcast stations were exempted from requirements to place public file materials in the online public file until March 1, 2018. This Public Notice is a reminder to all NCE radio broadcast stations, commercial radio broadcast stations in the top 50 Nielsen Audio markets with fewer than five full-time employees, and all commercial radio broadcast stations in markets below the top 50 or outside all markets that, as of March 1, 2018, they must place all existing public file material in the online public file, with the exception of existing political file material. In addition, on March 1, 2018, these radio broadcasters must begin placing all new public and political file material in the online file on a going-forward basis. These entities are not required to upload political files placed in their public file prior to March 1, 2018; however, they are required to retain those documents until the end of the two-year retention period.

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<sup>1</sup> *Expansion of Online Public File Obligations to Cable and Satellite TV Operators and Broadcast and Satellite Radio Licensees*, Report and Order, 31 FCC Rcd 526 (2016) (“*Expanded Online Public File Order*”). The database was initially established in 2012 for use by television broadcasters. *Standardized and Enhanced Disclosure Requirements for Television Broadcast Licensee Public Interest Obligations*, Second Report and Order, 27 FCC Rcd 4535 (2012) (“*Second Report and Order*”).

<sup>2</sup> *Effective Date Announced for Expanded Online Public Inspection File Database*, Public Notice, DA 16-536 (May 12, 2016). On that date, these entities were required to place their new public inspection file documents in the online public file database on a going-forward basis. These entities were given six months, or until December 24, 2016, to place their existing public file documents into the online public file. *Id.* See also *Expanded Online Public File Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 542-43, paras. 41-43.

On June 24, 2016, cable systems with 1,000 or more subscribers were required to place their new public inspection file documents in the online public file on a going-forward basis.<sup>3</sup> Cable systems with 1,000 or more subscribers but fewer than 5,000 subscribers were not required, however, to place new political file material in the online file until March 1, 2018.<sup>4</sup> This Public Notice is a reminder to cable systems with between 1,000 and 5,000 subscribers that, commencing March 1, 2018, they must begin placing new political file material in the online file database on a going-forward basis. These entities are not required to upload political files placed in their public file prior to March 1, 2018; however, they are required to retain those documents until the end of the two-year retention period.

We note that, although they are not required to do so, entities may elect voluntarily to upload to the online file existing political file material that would otherwise be required to be retained in the entity's local public file until the end of the two-year retention period.<sup>5</sup>

Members of the public and broadcasters will find answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the FCC's website (<https://publicfiles.fcc.gov/>) if they have questions. For further information, you can also contact the Licensing Support Hotline at (877) 480-3201 option 2, or (717) 338-2824 (TTY). The Hotline is available to assist with questions Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. ET. You may also submit requests and report any errors or problems with the online sites at <https://esupport.fcc.gov/request.htm>. In order to provide better service, all calls to the Hotline are recorded.

For additional information on this proceeding, contact Kim Matthews, [Kim.Matthews@fcc.gov](mailto:Kim.Matthews@fcc.gov), of the Media Bureau, Policy Division, (202) 418-2154. Press contact: Janice Wise (202- 418-8165; [Janice.Wise@fcc.gov](mailto:Janice.Wise@fcc.gov)).

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<sup>3</sup> See *Expanded Online Public File Order*, 31 FCC Rcd at 542-43, para. 41. These entities were given six months, or until December 24, 2016, to place their existing public file documents into the online public file.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 543, para 42. Cable systems with fewer than 1,000 subscribers are exempt from all online filing requirements. *Id.* at 543, para. 42 and at 546, para. 50.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at 538-39, para 28.