



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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DA 21-450  
April 27, 2021

## WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU TO ACCEPT 900 MHZ BROADBAND SEGMENT APPLICATIONS BEGINNING MAY 27, 2021

### WT Docket No. 17-200

By this *Public Notice*, the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (Bureau) announces that it will begin accepting 900 MHz broadband segment applications, and it details the information that applicants must include in their applications, as well as the procedures for submitting such materials.

On May 13, 2020, the Commission realigned the 900 MHz band to make available six megahertz of low-band spectrum for the development of critical wireless broadband technologies and services, while reserving the remaining four megahertz of spectrum for continued narrowband operations.<sup>1</sup> This transition of this band will enable next generation, mission-critical applications not available via current narrowband systems and will help to meet the evolving technological needs of industries that provide crucial services to the American public. The new 897.5-900.5/936.5-939.5 MHz 900 MHz broadband segment consists of paired three megahertz blocks, for a total of six megahertz of spectrum,<sup>2</sup> and will be licensed on a geographic, per county basis.<sup>3</sup>

In accordance with the *900 MHz Report and Order*,<sup>4</sup> the Bureau announces that the opening date for acceptance of 900 MHz broadband segment applications will be on **May 27, 2021**.

All 900 MHz broadband segment applicants must demonstrate in their overall application that they satisfy the eligibility conditions (Eligibility Certification) and submit a plan for

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<sup>1</sup> *Review of the Commission's Rules Governing the 896-901/935-940 MHz Band*, WT Docket No. 19-138, Report and Order, Order of Proposed Modification, and Order, 35 FCC Rcd 5183 (2020) (*900 MHz Report and Order*).

<sup>2</sup> 47 CFR § 27.1506.

<sup>3</sup> 900 MHz Report and Order, 35 FCC Rcd at 5232, para. 122. See also *Review of the Commission's Rules Governing the 896-901/935-940 MHz Band*, WT Docket No. 17-200, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 34 FCC Rcd 1550, 1558, para. 22. For purposes of the 900 MHz broadband licenses, we define counties using the United States Census Bureau's data reflecting county legal boundaries and names valid through January 1, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/geo/shapefiles/index.php>. 47 CFR § 27.1501. Equivalent entities are primary legal divisions of states. In most states, these entities are termed "counties." For a list of the 2017 counties and county equivalents, please visit Federal Communications Commission, FCC Areas (updated May 8, 2020), <https://www.fcc.gov/oet/maps/areas>.

<sup>4</sup> *900 MHz Report and Order*, 35 FCC Rcd at 5229, para. 113.

transitioning the 900 MHz band in the particular county requested (Transition Plan).<sup>5</sup> The applicant must also file, within 15 days of filing its 900 MHz broadband license application, an application(s) to cancel all of its 900 MHz SMR and B/ILT spectrum, up to six megahertz, for the county in which it seeks a broadband license, conditioned upon Commission grant of its underlying 900 MHz broadband license application.<sup>6</sup> In addition, applicants that relinquish less than six megahertz of spectrum are required to make an anti-windfall payment before the Commission will grant its 900 MHz broadband segment application.<sup>7</sup> Details for the specific Eligibility Certification and Transition Plan requirements are included in Attachment A.

Finally, applicants are required to certify in their applications that they understand and have complied or will comply with the requirements listed above. Applications in a condition acceptable for filing will be placed on Public Notice for 30 days, during which time interested parties may file petitions to deny.<sup>8</sup>

If the Commission finds that the applicant has satisfied the eligibility restrictions, application requirements, anti-windfall provisions, and that grant of the application is otherwise in the public interest, it will grant the 900 MHz broadband segment application and issue a six megahertz broadband license for the requested county. After grant of a license, a new 900 MHz broadband licensee may begin operation in the applicable county, subject to protecting covered incumbents.<sup>9</sup>

Applicants who have questions concerning this *Public Notice* may contact Katherine Patsas Nevitt of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Mobility Division, (202) 418-0638, [katherine.nevitt@fcc.gov](mailto:katherine.nevitt@fcc.gov).

ATTACHMENT A – Instructions for Eligibility Certification and Transition Plan Submissions

Action by the Acting Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

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<sup>5</sup> 47 CFR § 27.1503.

<sup>6</sup> 47 CFR § 27.1503(c).

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> 47 CFR § 1.933.

<sup>9</sup> A Covered Incumbent is any 900 MHz site-based licensee in the broadband segment that is required under section 90.621(b) to be protected by a broadband licensee with a base station at any location within the county, or any 900 MHz geographic-based SMR licensee in the broadband segment whose license area completely or partially overlaps the county. 47 CFR § 27.1501(g).