



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
45 L St., N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <https://www.fcc.gov>

DA 22-287

Released: March 17, 2022

FCC ANNOUNCES SECOND FORUM ON IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY OF ONLINE VIDEO PROGRAMMING

Forum Focusing on Audio Description will be held on March 28th

GN Docket No. 21-140

By this Public Notice, the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) announces a virtual event, the *Video Programming Accessibility Forum – Online Audio Description* on March 28, 2022, from 1:00 pm to 3:45 pm ET. The FCC’s Media Bureau and Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau will co-host this second accessibility-related Forum focused on issues surrounding audio description.

The term “audio description” references the insertion of audio-narrated descriptions of a television program’s key visual elements into natural pauses in a program’s dialogue.¹ Audio description makes television programming more accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and the Commission’s rules require certain television broadcast stations and multichannel video programming distributors (MVPDs) to provide audio description for a portion of the video programming they offer to consumers on television.² Consumers currently watch a large volume of video programming online, but the availability of audio description online is inconsistent, even for video programming for which an audio description track already exists. The *Video Programming Accessibility Forum – Online Audio Description* will explore the state of audio description availability for online video programming, including current best practices and technical issues to overcome. The Forum also will explore ways to enhance accessibility, such as voluntary actions to promote online audio description.

The Forum will include two panels that will feature speakers such as television, cable, and online video programming distributors, as well as consumer advocates. The full agenda for the Forum is attached.

This is a public event and will be streamed live on [fcc.gov/live](https://www.fcc.gov/live) and the FCC’s YouTube channel. We encourage the public and interested stakeholders to engage in this discussion by sending questions during the event to livequestions@fcc.gov. Up-to-date information regarding the Forum can be found on the event page: <https://www.fcc.gov/news-events/events/2022/03/video-programming-accessibility-forum-online-audio-description>. Commission staff will enter information about the panel, including all

¹ 47 CFR § 79.3(a)(3).

² *Id.* § 79.3(b). In 2020, the Commission updated its terminology to use the term “audio description” instead of the term “video description,” and the Commission’s rules make clear that these terms are synonymous. *See Video Description: Implementation of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010*, MB Docket No. 11-43, Report and Order, 35 FCC Rcd 12577 (2020); 47 CFR § 79.3(a)(3).

relevant public notices, the agenda, and a link to a video recording of the event, into the public record for this proceeding.

The meeting will be webcast with open captioning and sign language interpreters at www.fcc.gov/live. Additional reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. Include a description of the accommodation you will need and tell us how to contact you if we need more information. Make your request as early as possible. Last minute requests will be accepted but may be impossible to fill. Send an e-mail to: FCC504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530 (voice).

For further information, contact Diana Sokolow, Diana.Sokolow@fcc.gov, of the Policy Division, Media Bureau, (202) 418-0588, or Joshua Mendelsohn, Joshua.Mendelsohn@fcc.gov, of the Disability Rights Office, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, (202) 559-7304.

– FCC –

VIDEO PROGRAMMING ACCESSIBILITY FORUM

ONLINE AUDIO DESCRIPTION

CO-SPONSORED BY THE MEDIA BUREAU AND
THE CONSUMER AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS BUREAU

March 28, 2022

1:00 pm ET

FORUM AGENDA

1:00 pm:

Introduction

Holly Saurer, Chief, Media Bureau

Agenda Introduction

Hillary DeNigro, Deputy Chief, Media Bureau

Overview of Relevant FCC Rules

Maria Mullarkey, Chief, Policy Division, Media Bureau

Featured Speaker

Stephanae McCoy, Founder of Bold Blind Beauty and Abilities Crusader

Audio Description Demonstration

Satauna Howery, Award-winning Voice Actor and Audio Description Advocate

1:25 pm:

PANEL A – Current Best Practices and Technical Issues for Online Audio Description

Opening Remarks and Panel Moderator

Will Schell, Deputy Chief, Disability Rights Office, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau

Panelists

Martha Heller, Vice President, Government Relations and Regulatory Counsel, Paramount Global

Sarah Herrlinger, Senior Director, Global Accessibility Policy & Initiatives, Apple

Carl Richardson, Co-Chair, Audio Description Project, American Council of the Blind

Lori Samuels, Senior Director of Accessibility, NBCUniversal

Heather York, Vice President, Marketing and Government Affairs, VITAC

2:25 pm:

Break

2:30 pm:

PANEL B – Voluntary Actions to Promote Online Audio Description

Opening Remarks and Panel Moderator

Michael Scurato, Assistant Chief, Policy Division, Media Bureau

Panelists

Satauna Howery, Award-winning Voice Actor and Audio Description Advocate

Karin Jue, Senior Director & Head, PBS KIDS Distribution

Daniel Kocmarek, General Manager, Global Video Supply Chain and Content Operations, Prime Video

Petr Kucheryavyy, Senior Manager, Accessibility Center of Excellence, Charter Communications

Clark Rachfal, Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, American Council of the Blind

3:30 pm:

Closing Remarks

Hillary DeNigro, Deputy Chief, Media Bureau