

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

In re Application of
Spokane Translator Association
For Renewal of License for
Low Power FM Station KVFS-LP
Spokane, Washington
Facility ID No. 135324
NAL/Acct. No. MB-202441410003
FRN: 0021250121
File No. 0000226648

MEMORANDUM OPINION AND ORDER AND
NOTICE OF APPARENT LIABILITY FOR FORFEITURE

Adopted: January 11, 2024

Released: January 11, 2024

By the Chief, Audio Division, Media Bureau:

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Media Bureau (Bureau) has before it the application¹ of Spokane Translator Association (Licensee) for renewal of license for low power FM (LPFM) Station KVFS-LP, Spokane, Washington (Station). In this Memorandum Opinion and Order and Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture (NAL),² we find that the Licensee apparently willfully violated section 73.3539³ of the Commission’s rules (Rules) by failing to timely file a license renewal application for the Station, as ordered by a short-term renewal letter.⁴ Based upon our review of the facts and circumstances before us, we conclude that the Licensee is apparently liable for a monetary forfeiture in the amount of one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500).

II. BACKGROUND

2. Section 73.3539(a) of the Rules requires that applications for renewal of license for broadcast stations must be filed “not later than the first day of the fourth full calendar month prior to the expiration date of the license sought to be renewed.”⁵ Licensee’s prior term expired on February 1, 2022. Accordingly, it filed an initial renewal application on October 4, 2021.⁶ Due to significant periods of silence during the Station’s previous term, the Bureau determined that the Station failed to meet its public service commitment, and the license should only be renewed for a period of one year.⁷ The Short Term Renewal Letter granted Licensee’s prior renewal application for a period of one year, to expire on

¹ Application File No. 0000226648 (filed Nov. 16, 2023) (2023 Renewal Application).

² This NAL is issued pursuant to sections 309(k) and 503(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (Act), and section 1.80 of the Rules. See 47 U.S.C. §§ 309(k), 503(b); 47 CFR § 1.80. The Bureau has delegated authority to issue the NAL under section 0.283 of the Commission’s rules. See 47 CFR § 0.283.

³ See 47 CFR § 73.3539.

⁴ Spokane Translator Association, Letter Order, Ref 1800B3-ATS (MB Feb. 3, 2023) (Short Term Renewal Letter); see also Application File No. 0000162531 (filed Oct. 4, 2021) (2021 Renewal Application), Attach. “2023-02-03 KVFS-LP Short Term Letter.pdf”.

⁵ 47 CFR § 73.3539(a).

⁶ 2021 Renewal Application.

⁷ Short Term Renewal Letter at 1-3.

February 3, 2024, and specified that, pursuant to section 73.3539(a), the 2023 Renewal Application must be filed by October 1, 2023. Licensee did not file the 2023 Renewal Application until November 16, 2023. Licensee provides no explanation for its untimely filing of the 2023 Renewal Application.

III. DISCUSSION

3. *Proposed Forfeiture.* In this case, the Licensee failed to file the 2023 Renewal Application on or before October 1, 2023, as required by section 73.3539(a) of the Rules and the *Short Term Renewal Letter*. The 2023 Renewal Application was not received until November 16, 2023. Moreover, as noted above, Licensee did not provide an explanation that would excuse the late filing.

4. This *NAL* is issued pursuant to section 503(b)(1)(B) of the Act. Under that provision, a person who is found to have willfully or repeatedly failed to comply with any provision of the Act or any rule, regulation, or order issued by the Commission shall be liable to the United States for a forfeiture penalty.⁸ Section 312(f)(1) of the Act defines willful as “the conscious and deliberate commission or omission of [any] act, irrespective of any intent to violate” the law.⁹ The legislative history to section 312(f)(1) of the Act clarifies that this definition of willful applies to both sections 312 and 503(b) of the Act,¹⁰ and the Commission has so interpreted the term in the section 503(b) context.¹¹

5. The Commission's *Forfeiture Policy Statement* and section 1.80(b)(11) of the Rules establish a base forfeiture amount of \$3,000 for the failure to file a required form.¹² In determining the appropriate forfeiture amount, we may adjust the base amount upward or downward by considering the factors enumerated in section 503(b)(2)(E) of the Act, including “the nature, circumstances, extent and gravity of the violation, and, with respect to the violator, the degree of culpability, any history of prior offenses, ability to pay, and such other matters as justice may require.”¹³

6. In this case, the Licensee failed to file a timely renewal application for the Station and has not provided any explanation for its untimely filing. However, the Licensee did file the 2023 Renewal Application prior to the expiration of the Station's license. Taking into consideration all of the factors required by section 503(b)(2)(E) of the Act and the *Forfeiture Policy Statement*, we will reduce the forfeiture from the base amount to \$1,500 for the failure to file a timely license renewal application because, as an LPFM station, the Station is providing a secondary service.¹⁴

IV. ORDERING CLAUSES

7. Accordingly, **IT IS ORDERED**, pursuant to section 503(b) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and section 1.80 of the Commission's rules,¹⁵ that Spokane Translator Association is hereby **NOTIFIED** of its **APPARENT LIABILITY FOR FORFEITURE** in the amount of one thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) for its apparent willful violation of section 73.3539 of the

⁸ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(1)(B). *See also* 47 CFR § 1.80(a)(1).

⁹ 47 U.S.C. § 312(f)(1).

¹⁰ *See* H.R. Rep. No. 97-765, 97th Cong. 2d Sess. 51 (1982).

¹¹ *See Southern California Broad. Co.*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 6 FCC Rcd 4387, 4388, para. 5 (1991), *recon. denied*, Memorandum Opinion and Order, 7 FCC Rcd 3454 (1992).

¹² *See Forfeiture Policy Statement and Amendment of Section 1.80(b) of the Rules to Incorporate the Forfeiture Guidelines*, Report and Order, 12 FCC Rcd 17087, 17113-15 (1997) (*Forfeiture Policy Statement*), *recon. denied*, 15 FCC Rcd 303 (1999); 47 CFR § 1.80(b)(11), note to paragraph (b)(11), Section I.

¹³ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(2)(E); *see also Forfeiture Policy Statement*, 12 FCC Rcd at 17100; 47 CFR § 1.80(b)(11).

¹⁴ *See, e.g., La Casa de la Raza*, Memorandum Opinion and Order and Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, DA 22-195 (MB Feb. 25, 2022) and *Virginia Center for Public Press*, Memorandum Opinion and Order and Notice of Apparent Liability, 34 FCC Rcd 9312 (MB 2019) (each proposing a \$1,500 forfeiture for untimely filed renewal application for LPFM station).

¹⁵ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b); 47 CFR § 1.80.

Commission's rules.¹⁶

8. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED**, pursuant to section 1.80 of the Commission's rules, that, within thirty (30) days of the release date of this Notice of Apparent Liability, Spokane Translator Association **SHALL PAY** the full amount of the proposed forfeiture or **SHALL FILE** a written statement seeking reduction or cancellation of the proposed forfeiture.

9. Payment of the forfeiture must be made by credit card, ACH (Automated Clearing House) debit from a bank account using CORES (the Commission's online payment system),¹⁷ or by wire transfer. Payments by check or money order to pay a forfeiture are no longer accepted. Below are instructions that payors should follow based on the form of payment selected:¹⁸

- Payment by wire transfer must be made to ABA Number 021030004, receiving bank TREAS/NYC, and Account Number 27000001. A completed Form 159 must be faxed to the Federal Communications Commission at 202-418-2843 or e-mailed to RROGWireFaxes@fcc.gov on the same business day the wire transfer is initiated. Failure to provide all required information in Form 159 may result in payment not being recognized as having been received. When completing FCC Form 159, enter the Account Number in block number 23A (call sign/other ID), enter the letters "FORF" in block number 24A (payment type code), and enter in block number 11 the FRN(s) captioned above (Payor FRN).¹⁹ For additional detail and wire transfer instructions, go to <https://www.fcc.gov/licensing-databases/fees/wire-transfer>.
- Payment by credit card must be made by using the Commission's Registration System (CORES) at <https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/userLogin.do>. To pay by credit card, log-in using the FCC Username associated to the FRN captioned above. If payment must be split across FRNs, complete this process for each FRN. Next, select "Manage Existing FRNs | FRN Financial | Bills & Fees" from the CORES Menu, then select FRN Financial and the view/make payments option next to the FRN. Select the "Open Bills" tab and find the bill number associated with the NAL/Acct. No. The bill number is the NAL Acct. No. (e.g., NAL/Acct. No. 1912345678 would be associated with FCC Bill Number 1912345678). After selecting the bill for payment, choose the "Pay by Credit Card" option. Please note that there is a \$24,999.99 limit on credit card transactions.
- Payment by ACH must be made by using the Commission's Registration System (CORES) at <https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/paymentFrnLogin.do>. To pay by ACH, log in using the FRN captioned above. If payment must be split across FRNs, complete this process for each FRN. Next, select "Manage Existing FRNs | FRN Financial | Bills & Fees" on the CORES Menu, then select FRN Financial and the view/make payments option next to the FRN. Select the "Open Bills" tab and find the bill number associated with the NAL/Acct. No. The bill number is the NAL/Acct. No. (e.g., NAL/Acct. No. 1912345678 would be associated with FCC Bill Number 1912345678). Finally, choose the "Pay from Bank Account" option. Please contact the appropriate financial institution to confirm the correct Routing Number and the correct account number from which payment will be made and verify with that financial institution that the designated account has authorization to accept ACH transactions.

10. Any request for making full payment over time under an installment plan should be sent to: Associate Managing Director—Financial Operations, Federal Communications Commission, 45 L

¹⁶ 47 CFR § 73.3539.

¹⁷ Payments made using CORES do not require the submission of an FCC Form 159.

¹⁸ For questions regarding payment procedures, please contact the Financial Operations Group Help Desk by phone at 1-877-480-3201 (option #6), or by e-mail at ARINQUIRIES@fcc.gov.

¹⁹ Instructions for completing the form may be obtained at <https://www.fcc.gov/Forms/Form159/159.pdf>.

Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20554.²⁰ Questions regarding payment procedures should be directed to the Financial Operations Group Help Desk by phone, 1-877-480-3201 (option #6), or by e-mail, ARINQUIRIES@fcc.gov.

11. Any written response seeking reduction or cancellation of the proposed forfeiture must include a detailed factual statement supported by appropriate documentation and affidavits pursuant to sections 1.16 and 1.80(g)(3) of the Commission's rules.²¹ The written response must be filed with the Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 45 L Street NE, Washington DC 20554, ATTN: Albert Shuldiner, Chief, Audio Division, Media Bureau, and **MUST INCLUDE** the NAL/Acct. No. referenced above. Filings can be sent 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.²² A copy must be emailed to Alexander.Sanjenis@fcc.gov and Olivia.Hill@fcc.gov.

- Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.
- Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 45 L Street, NE, Washington, DC 20554.

12. The Commission will not consider reducing or canceling a forfeiture in response to a claim of inability to pay unless the respondent submits: (1) federal tax returns for the most recent three-year period; (2) financial statements prepared according to generally accepted accounting practices (GAAP); or (3) some other reliable and objective documentation that accurately reflects the respondent's current financial status. Any claim of inability to pay must specifically identify the basis for the claim by reference to the financial documentation submitted. Inability to pay, however, is only one of several factors that the Commission will consider in determining the appropriate forfeiture, and we have discretion to not reduce or cancel the forfeiture if other prongs of section § 503(b)(2)(E) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, support that result.²³

13. **IT IS FURTHER ORDERED**, that copies of this Notice of Apparent Liability shall be sent by First Class and Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, to Spokane Translator Association, c/o Ian Cunningham, Esq., 426 E 22nd Ave., Spokane, WA 99203.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Albert Shuldiner
Chief, Audio Division
Media Bureau

²⁰ See 47 CFR § 1.1914.

²¹ 47 CFR §§ 1.16 and 1.80(g)(3).

²² Effective March 19, 2020, and until further notice, the Commission no longer accepts any hand or messenger delivered filings. This is a temporary measure taken to help protect the health and safety of individuals, and to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. See *FCC Announces Closure of FCC Headquarters Open Window and Change in Hand-Delivery Filing*, Public Notice, 35 FCC Rcd 2788 (2020).

²³ 47 U.S.C. § 503(b)(2)(E). See, e.g., *Adrian Abramovich*, Forfeiture Order, 33 FCC Rcd 4663, 4678-79, paras. 44-45 (2018).