



NEWS

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

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

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
July 19, 2013

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Mike Snyder, 202-418-0997
E-mail: Michael.Snyder@fcc.gov

FCC COMMEMORATES 23rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Commission Highlights Milestones in Effort to Ensure Access by Americans with Disabilities to Innovative Communications and Video Technologies

Washington, D.C. – In recognition of the 23rd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the FCC today highlighted milestones in its efforts to bring the accessibility provisions of the Communications Act into the digital age by implementing the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA). Signed into law by President Obama on October 8, 2010, the CVAA ensures that people with disabilities have equal access to Internet communication and video programming technologies of the 21st century.

Milestones in the Commission's implementation of the CVAA include:

Communications

- **Access to Advanced Communications Services and Equipment**, such as text messaging and e-mail; rules were adopted October 7, 2011, with full implementation by October 8, 2013.
- **Access to Web Browsers on Mobile Phones** by people who are blind or visually impaired; rules were adopted April 26, 2013, and will be effective on October 8, 2013.
- **National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program**, supporting programs that distribute communications equipment to low-income individuals who have both significant vision and hearing loss; rules were adopted April 6, 2011, a pilot program was launched on July 1, 2012, and hundreds of individuals have been served by the program to date.
- **Contributions by Non-Interconnected VoIP Providers to Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) Fund**; rules were adopted October 7, 2011, and fully implemented by the 2012-13 TRS Fund year.
- **Emergency Access Advisory Committee**; conducted a nationwide survey and submitted a report in 2011 and additional reports in 2013; recommendations included actions needed for migration to a national Internet protocol-enabled network, and to develop an interim, mobile text solution that can be rapidly deployed to provide nationwide access to 9-1-1 services, including to those in the disability community.

Video Programming

- **Video Programming Accessibility Advisory Committee**; submitted reports and recommendations on captioning Internet-delivered video programming in 2011, and on video description, accessibility of televised emergency information, and equipment accessibility requirements in 2012.
- **Closed Captioning on Internet-Delivered Video Programming**; rules were adopted January 12, 2012, with a multi-year phase-in that began September 30, 2012 for programs to contain captions; implementation required by January 1, 2014, for equipment to deliver and display captions.
- **Video Description on Television**; rules were adopted August 24, 2011, which became effective July 1, 2012, for programs to contain video description, and implementation required by May 26, 2015, for equipment to deliver video description.
- **Access to Televised Emergency Information** for people who are blind or visually impaired; rules were adopted April 9, 2013, and will be fully implemented by May 26, 2015.
- **Video Equipment Accessibility** to ensure that user interfaces, guides, and menus for digital apparatus and navigation devices are accessible; notice of proposed rulemaking was adopted May 30, 2013, and final rules are due October 9, 2013.

The FCC has moved aggressively to implement this landmark legislation. To date, it has met every rulemaking deadline set by the CVAA and is committed to meeting the remaining deadlines. The FCC is also committed to working with industry, consumers, and other stakeholders to address and resolve disability-related accessibility issues.

More Online Resources

- FCC Consumer Guide on the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act: <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/21st-century-communications-and-video-accessibility-act-2010>.
- The FCC's Accessibility Clearinghouse, a web-based repository of information about accessibility solutions for telecommunications and advanced communications services and equipment: <http://apps.fcc.gov/accessibilityclearinghouse/>
- The First FCC Biennial CVAA Report to Congress (October 5, 2012): http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-12-1602A1.pdf

-FCC-

News about the Federal Communications Commission can also be found on the Commission's web site www.fcc.gov.