



# REGULATORY FEES FACT SHEET

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

September 9, 2019

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## WHAT YOU OWE – INTERNATIONAL AND SATELLITE SERVICES LICENSEES FOR FY 2019

Each year, the Commission is required to collect regulatory fees. Licensees and regulatees are assessed fees as set forth in *Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2019, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, (released August 27, 2019) (“FY 2019 Regulatory Fees, Report and Order”). The Commission also publishes industry-specific guidance in *Who Owes Fees & What Is My FY 2019 Fee*, which can be found on the Commission website at <http://www.fcc.gov/regfees>.

The Commission’s automated filing and payment system (“Fee Filer”) is available for filing and viewing of FY 2019 regulatory fees. While FY 2019 regulatory fees will not become effective until the rulemaking is published in the *Federal Register*, regulatees at their own discretion, may submit payments at any time before the effective due date of FY 2019 regulatory fees. **Regulatory fee payments<sup>1</sup> MUST BE RECEIVED by the Commission no later than 11:59 PM, Eastern Daylight Time, on September 24, 2019.**

This *Fact Sheet* applies to providers of international bearer circuits, earth station licensees (Part 25), geostationary space station licensees (Part 25) and direct broadcast satellite licensees (Part 100), non-geostationary orbit satellite system licensees (formerly low earth orbit satellite systems) (Part 25), and submarine cable licensees (*see also, Public Notice: Submarine Cable Systems –FY 2019*).

Licensees owe regulatory fees for each license held as of October 1, 2018, and payment is due even if a license expired after October 1, 2018. In instances where a license or authorization is transferred or assigned after October 1, 2018, the fee must be paid by the party that is the licensee or holder of the authorization on the date that the fee payment is due.

If an earth station's license limits its operational authority to a particular satellite system that is not yet operational, a regulatory fee payment for the earth station is not due until the first satellite in the system becomes operational pursuant to section 25.121(d) of our rules.

### Earth Stations

**Who Must Pay:** VSAT and Equivalent C-Band Antennas: These facilities are earth station systems comprising very small aperture terminals making up authorized networks operating in the 12 and 14 GHz bands that provide a variety of communications services to other stations in the network. Each system, authorized pursuant to blanket licensing procedures in Part 25 of the Commission’s rules, consists of a network of technically-identical small fixed-satellite earth stations which often includes a larger hub station. Entities holding these types of authorizations will be assessed a regulatory fee per authorization or registration, as well as a fee for each associated Hub Station.

Mobile Satellite Earth Stations: Mobile satellite service providers operate under blanket licenses for mobile

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission has instituted a mandatory electronic payment policy, which means that licensees will no longer be able to make regulatory fee payments by check, money order, or cashier’s check. Only credit card, ACH, and wire transfer payments will be accepted. Please make sure that your electronic fee payment is made and the transaction is complete by the due date of FY 2019 regulatory fees.

antennas (transceivers) which are smaller than one meter and provide voice or data communications, including position location information, for mobile platforms such as cars, buses or trucks.

Earth Station Antennas: Transmit/Receive and Transmit-Only Antennas: These licensees include private carriers and common carriers that operate fixed-satellite earth station antennas to provide telephone, television, data, and other forms of communication, including antennas used to transmit and receive and transmit-only. Also included in this category are telemetry, tracking and control (TT&C) earth stations and transportable earth stations.

Earth Station Antennas: Receive-Only Antennas: The Commission does not assess regulatory fees for receive-only earth station antennas.

**Notice of Billing:** Earth Station licensees will not receive a pre-completed regulatory fee bill (FCC Form 159-B) in the mail for their Earth Station licenses. A regulatory fee bill will be created but this bill will be available for viewing only by accessing Fee Filer. Earth Station licensees are also required to make regulatory fee payments for all other regulatory fees that they owe.

**Fee Calculation:** \$425 per license or authorization, and \$425 for each associated Hub Station.

### **Geostationary Orbit Space Stations and Direct Broadcast Satellite Service**

**Notice of Billing:** Geostationary orbit space station and Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS) licensees will not receive a pre-printed regulatory fee bill (FCC Form 159-B) from the Commission for their satellite space station authorization(s). A regulatory fee bill will be created but this bill will be available for viewing only by accessing Fee Filer. Geostationary space station licensees are also required to make regulatory fee payments for all other fee categories as well.

**Who Must Pay:** Entities authorized to operate space stations in geostationary orbit<sup>2</sup> in accordance with section 25.121(d) and direct broadcast satellites (Part 100).

**Fee Calculation:** \$159,625 per operational space station in geostationary orbit in accordance with section 25.121(d) as of October 1, 2018. A fee payment is required “upon the commencement of operation of a system's first satellite as reported annually pursuant to sections 25.142(c), 25.143(e), 25.145(g), or upon certification of operation of a single satellite pursuant to section 25.121(d).” Multiple technically identical geostationary satellites collocated at the same orbital location will be considered one station for the purpose of per-space station regulatory fee calculation.

### **Non-Geostationary Orbit Satellite Systems**

**Notice of Billing:** Non-Geostationary orbit space station and DBS licensees will not receive a pre-printed regulatory fee bill (FCC Form 159-B) from the Commission for their satellite space station authorization(s). A regulatory fee bill will be created, but this bill will be available for viewing only by accessing Fee Filer. Non-Geostationary space station licensees are also required to make regulatory fee payments for all other regulatory fees that they owe.

**Who Must Pay:** Entities authorized to operate systems of satellites in non-geostationary orbit under Part 25 to provide communications between satellites and earth stations on a common carrier or private carrier basis.

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<sup>2</sup> Domestic and international satellites, positioned in orbit to remain approximately fixed relative to the earth, authorized to provide communications between satellites and earth stations on a common carrier or private carrier basis in accordance with section 25.121(d).

**Fee Calculation:** \$154,875 per operational system in non-geostationary orbit.<sup>3</sup> A fee payment is required “upon the commencement of operation of a system's first satellite as reported annually pursuant to sections 25.142(c), 25.143(e), 25.145(g), or upon certification of operation of a single satellite pursuant to section 25.121(d).”

**International Bearer Circuits**

**Who Must Pay:**

*International Terrestrial and Satellite.* Regulatory fees for International Bearer Circuits are to be paid by facilities-based common carriers that have active (used or leased) international bearer circuits as of December 31, 2018 in any terrestrial or satellite transmission facility for the provision of service to an end user or resale carrier, which includes active circuits to themselves or to their affiliates. In addition, non-common carrier terrestrial and satellite operators must pay a fee for each circuit sold or leased to any customer, including themselves or their affiliates, other than an international common carrier authorized by the Commission to provide U.S. international common carrier services. “Active circuits” for these purposes include backup and redundant circuits. In addition, whether circuits are used specifically for voice or data is not relevant in determining that they are active circuits.

**Fee Calculation:** \$121 per active Gbps.

TYPE OF FEE	REGULATORY FEE PAYMENT	PAYMENT TYPE CODE
International Bearer Circuits: Terrestrial <u>Common Carrier and Non-Common Carrier</u> ; Satellite <u>Common Carrier and Non-Common Carrier</u> . Capacity as of December 31, 2018	\$121 per active Gbps	1976

**Submarine Cable Systems**

*Submarine Cable:* Regulatory fees for submarine cable systems will be paid, per cable landing license, for all submarine cable systems operating as of December 31, 2018. Capacity for calculating fees should be based on “lit” capacity.

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<sup>3</sup> A LEO system consists of one or more satellites operating in a non-geostationary satellite constellation. Payment is required for any LEO System that has one or more satellites operating pursuant to sections 25.142(c), 25.143(e), 25.145(g), or upon certification of operation of a single satellite pursuant to section 25.121(d) as of October 1, 2009.

TYPE OF FEE Submarine Cable Systems (capacity as of December 31, 2018)	REGULATORY FEE PAYMENT	PAYMENT TYPE CODE
< 50 Gbps	\$12,575	1986
50 Gbps or greater, but less than 250 Gbps	\$25,150	1987
250 Gbps or greater, but less than 1,000 Gbps	\$50,300	1988
1,000 Gbps or greater, but less than 4,000 Gbps	\$100,600	1989
4,000 Gbps or greater	\$201,225	1990

### **International Public Fixed Radio and International (HF) Broadcast Stations**

The fee categories of International Public Fixed Radio and International High Frequency (HF) Broadcast Stations were eliminated from regulatory fee assessment on August 18, 2009. The elimination of these two categories is based on the Commission's actions in the FY 2009 Regulatory Fees *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order* and the FY 2009 Regulatory Fees *Report and Order*.<sup>4</sup> Hence, there is no regulatory fee obligation for licensees holding International Public Fixed Radio and International (HF) Broadcast Station licenses.

### **Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS) Regulatory Fee**

In FY 2015, The Commission instituted a new DBS fee to be paid on a per subscriber basis. For additional guidance on how to pay this fee, please see *What You Owe – Cable Television Systems for FY 2019* Fact Sheet, which can be found on the Commission website at <http://www.fcc.gov/regfees>.

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<sup>4</sup> See *Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2009*, MD Docket No. 09-65, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order, 24 FCC Rcd 5966 (2009) (“FY 2009 NPRM and Order”), and *Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 2009*, MD Docket No. 09-65, Report and Order, 74 FR 40089 (August 11, 2009) (“FY 2009 Report and Order”).

**SUMMARY OF FEES FOR INTERNATIONAL SERVICES**

TYPE OF FEE	REGULATORY FEE PAYMENT	PAYMENT TYPE CODE
Earth Stations	\$425 per station or Hub Station	1973
Geostationary Orbit Space Stations and Direct Broadcast Satellite Service Licensees	\$159,625 per operational station	1974
Non-Geostationary Orbit Satellite Systems	\$154,875 per operational system	1975
International Bearer Circuits: Terrestrial Common Carrier and Non-Common Carrier; Satellite Common Carrier and Non-Common Carrier (capacity as of December 31, 2018)	\$121 per active Gbps	1976
< 50 Gbps	\$12,575	1986
50 Gbps or greater, but less than 250 Gbps	\$25,150	1987
250 Gbps or greater, but less than 1,000 Gbps	\$50,300	1988
1,000 Gbps or greater, but less than 4,000 Gbps	\$100,600	1989
4,000 Gbps or greater	\$201,225	1990

\* Equivalent circuits include the 64 KB circuit equivalent of larger bit stream circuits (e.g., the 64 KB equivalent of a 2.048 MB circuit is 30) and analog circuits such as 3 and 4 KHz circuits used for international services. The number of equivalent 64 KB circuits for analog television channels is given by the following table:

ANALOG TELEVISION CHANNEL SIZE (MHz)	NO. OF EQUIVALENT 64 KB CIRCUITS
36	630
24	288
18	240

<u>Actual Speed</u>	<u>in 64 Kbps Units</u>
1 T-1	24
1 E-1	30
1 DS-3	630
1 STM	1,890
5 Gbps	60,480
10 Gbps	120,960

## MANDATORY USE OF FEE FILER

The use of the online Fee Filer system for filing regulatory fees has not changed since the process was first initiated in FY 2009: licensees and regulatees must first enter the Commission's Fee Filer system with a valid FRN and password, and follow the online prompts to review their data and submit an electronic fee payment. Use of the online Fee Filer system is mandatory, and **payments in the form of checks, money orders, and cashier's checks will not be accepted.**<sup>5</sup> In making a wire transfer, please fax the "Wire Transfer Instructions" from Fee Filer to the Federal Communications Commission at (202) 418-2843 at least one hour before initiating the wire transfer (**but on the same business day**) so as not to delay crediting their account. **These Wire Transfer Instructions contain valuable information (e.g. FRN, Voucher Number, Payer Name, and the Amount of the Wire) that will help to post the payment more quickly and avoid costly delays that could result in penalties and interest for missing the payment due date.** Please note that most wire transfers initiated after 6:00 p.m. (EDT) will be credited the next business day, and additional time may be needed for international wires. Fee payors should discuss arrangements (including bank closing schedules, and bank wire transaction fees for which the Commission is not responsible) with their bankers.

## DE MINIMIS REGULATORY FEE LEVEL

Regulatees whose total FY 2019 annual regulatory fee liability, including all categories of fees for which payment is due, is \$1,000 or less are exempt from payment of FY 2019 regulatory fees. The *de minimis* threshold applies only to filers of annual regulatory fees (not regulatory fees paid through multi-year filings), and it is not a permanent exemption. Rather, each regulatee will need to reevaluate their total fee liability each fiscal year to determine whether they meet the *de minimis* exemption. Regulatees are responsible for calculating their own total fee obligation to determine whether they qualify for this *de minimis* exemption. The Commission reserves the right to request documentation that supports a *de minimis* exemption claim.

## LIMITATIONS ON CREDIT CARD TRANSACTIONS

In accordance with U.S. Treasury Announcement No. A-2014-04 (July 2014), the amount that can be charged on a credit card for transactions with federal agencies has been reduced to \$24,999.99.<sup>6</sup> Previously, the credit card limit was \$49,999.99. This lower transaction amount is effective June 1, 2015. Transactions greater than \$24,999.99 will be rejected. This limit applies to single payments or bundled payments of more than one bill. Multiple transactions to a single agency in one day may be aggregated and treated as a single transaction subject to the \$24,999.99 limit. Customers who wish to pay an amount greater than \$24,999.99 should consider available electronic alternatives such as Visa or MasterCard debit cards, ACH debits from a bank account, and wire transfers. Each of these payment options is available after filing regulatory fee information in Fee Filer. Further details will be provided regarding payment methods and procedures at the time of FY 2019 regulatory fee collection in Fact Sheets, available at <https://www.fcc.gov/regfees>.

Regulatory fee payments that exceed the U.S. Treasury limit and are rejected by Treasury, causing a payment to miss the deadline, will be subject to interest, fees, and a 25% late payment penalty.

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<sup>5</sup> Payors should note that this change will mean that entities that have previously paid both regulatory fees and application fees at the same time by paper check will no longer be able to do so because regulatory fees payments by paper check will no longer be accepted.

<sup>6</sup> Customers who owe an amount on a bill, debt, or other obligation due to the federal government are prohibited from splitting the total amount due into multiple payments. Splitting an amount owed into several payment transactions violates the credit card network and Fiscal Service rules. An amount owed that exceeds the Fiscal Service maximum dollar amount, \$24,999.99, may not be split into two or more payment transactions in the same day by using one or multiple cards. Also, an amount owed that exceeds the Fiscal Service maximum dollar amount may not be split into two or more transactions over multiple days by using one or more cards.