

Media Contact:

Janice Wise, (202) 418-8165
janice.wise@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

**FCC PROPOSES TO MAKE MORE VIDEO PROGRAMMING
ACCESSIBLE TO BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS**

Proposal Would Expand Video Description to 40 Additional Television Markets

WASHINGTON, April 23, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed to expand its video description rules to ensure that more video programming is accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, helping them be more informed and entertained by television programming.

Video description inserts audio that describes a program’s key visual elements in the natural pauses in dialogue. The Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA) required the Commission to adopt rules requiring certain television broadcast stations and multichannel video programming distributors (MVPDs) to provide video description for a portion of the video programming that they offer to consumers on television.

The current video description rules apply to broadcast television stations in the top 60 television markets. The CVAA allows the Commission to phase in the video description regulations for an additional 10 markets per year if it determines that the costs for program owners, providers, and distributors in those additional markets are reasonable. The FCC’s Media Bureau’s 2019 Second Report to Congress on video description demonstrated the benefit of expanding the video description regulations beyond the top 60 markets because of the significant benefits video description provides.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) proposes to expand the scope of these regulations to an additional 10 designated market areas each year for four years, beginning on January 1, 2021. Thus, the Commission tentatively concludes that video description requirements should apply to markets 61 through 100. The NPRM also proposes that in 2023, after assessing the reasonableness of associated costs, the Commission consider whether to further expand video description requirements to markets 101 and beyond.

Lastly, the NPRM proposes to modernize the terminology in the Commission’s regulations to use “audio description” rather than “video description,” to reflect more accurately industry standards and consumer expectations. The proposal in the NPRM reflects a recommendation from the Commission’s Disability Advisory Committee.

MB Docket No. 11-43

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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).