

**Media Contact:**

Will Wiquist, (202) 418-0509  
will.wiquist@fcc.gov

**For Immediate Release****FCC EXPANDS UNLICENSED WIRELESS OPERATIONS IN TV  
WHITE SPACES*****Rule Changes Will Enhance Broadband Connectivity in Rural Communities***

WASHINGTON, October 27, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today amended its rules governing unlicensed wireless services provided over spectrum in the television broadcasting bands – the so-called TV white spaces. The amended rules will allow for expanded use of this spectrum for the delivery of broadband services in rural and underserved communities while protecting broadcast television stations and other licensed services from harmful interference.

The Report and Order adopted by the Commission today amends the FCC’s Part 15 rules, which govern how unlicensed white space devices operate over spectrum not in use by licensed services or protected entities. Wireless Internet Service Providers currently use fixed white space devices to provide Internet connectivity to schools, libraries, and rural households. Today’s action will strengthen these efforts by allowing for more flexibility in how wireless services are provided within white spaces, better reflecting technological and geographic realities.

Specifically, the Commission is increasing the maximum permissible power and antenna height for fixed white space devices operating in “less congested” areas (generally rural and unserved areas) in the TV bands. The amended rules also increase the minimum required separation distances between protected services and entities operating in the band and white space devices operating at the new higher power levels and higher heights above average terrain in order to ensure that broadcast television stations are protected from harmful interference. In addition, the Commission is permitting higher power mobile operations using white space devices in “less congested” areas within defined geo-fenced areas, such as school bus routes or farm boundaries. The rule changes also provide flexibility for new and innovative narrowband white space devices so that users can more fully benefit from Internet of Things applications.

Finally, the Commission also adopted a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to explore whether to modify its rules to permit the use of terrain-based models to determine available TV channels for white space devices.

Action by the Commission October 27, 2020 by Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 20-156). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks approving and issuing separate statements.

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**Media Relations: (202) 418-0500 / ASL: (844) 432-2275 / Twitter: @FCC / [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)**

*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).*