

FCC to Accept Applications for Low Power TV Channel Changes

May 29, 2024

On May 28, 2024, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC or Commission) Media Bureau announced that it will partially lift its long-standing freeze on major modification applications and permit all Class A, low power television (LPTV), and television translator (TV translator) stations to file major change applications beginning on August 20, 2024, to change their existing channels.

According to the Media Bureau, this partial lifting of its long-standing freeze on major modification applications will enable stations that could not change channels before the Incentive Auction to resolve reception issues and improve television service. The FCC will accept applications on a first-come, first-serve basis and will implement a daily "cut off" for purposes of determining mutual exclusivity. As part of the first-come, first-serve approach, applicants will be given an opportunity to resolve mutual exclusivity through settlement or engineering amendment.

In its Public Notice, the Media Bureau described this as the "first step in the process of lifting the freeze that has been in place since 2010 restricting the filing of major modifications for Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations and the filing of applications for new LPTV and TV translator stations." As of now, the Commission will not accept applications for any other changes, including requests to move a facility greater than 30 miles. The Bureau indicated that it will announce at a future date plans and procedures to lift the freeze on all major changes to Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations (e.g., channel change, relocating transmitter sites greater than 30 miles or without contour overlap) and resume first-come, first-serve applications for new LPTV and TV translator stations.

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Practice Areas

Media
Telecom, Media & Technology

Wiley's Media Practice has extensive experience counseling television stations on FCC applications and compliance. If you are interested in applying for a channel or have questions, please contact one of the attorneys listed on this alert or the Wiley attorney who routinely handles your FCC matters.