

ALERT

FCC to Provide Expanded Major Change and New Station Opportunities for Class A, LPTV, and TV Translator Stations

September 5, 2025

On September 3, 2025, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Media Bureau released a Public Notice beginning a phased process to lift the current freeze on major changes for Class A television, low power television (LPTV) and TV translator stations. The FCC also announced that broadcasters can file applications for new LPTV and TV translator stations.

The Public Notice marks the first time in decades that low power broadcasters can apply for major changes with only limited restrictions or new low power stations.

Lifting the Freeze: The FCC's Four-Phased Process

The FCC's four-phased approach to lifting the freeze on major change and new station applications will extend through January 2026.

Phase 1: Temporary Major and Minor Modification Filing Freezes

The Commission will begin its four-phased process by instituting two freezes through mid-October, designed to give stations time to prepare for major modification application filing:

- *Effective September 3, 2025:* The Bureau instituted a freeze on all major change applications for Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations.
- *October 15, 2025, 6:00 p.m. ET:* The Bureau will institute a freeze on all minor change applications for Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations.

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Any major or minor modification applications filed during these temporary freezes will be dismissed and must be refiled.

Phase 2: Expanded Major Modification Filing Opportunity

The FCC will allow existing Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations to file major modification applications before new station applications.

- *October 22, 2025, 12:01 a.m. ET:* The Bureau will lift the major modification filing freeze for Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations, in addition to the temporary freeze on minor modification and displacement applications.
 - Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis and can include relocations of no more than 121.0 km from the station's antenna reference coordinates.

Any applications that do not comply with the Bureau's limitations or the Commission's part 73 and 74 rules will be dismissed and must be refiled.

Phase 3: Temporary Reinstitution of Major and Minor Application Filing Freezes

Following the major change opportunity described above, the FCC will reinstitute freezes on major and minor change applications to allow parties to prepare for filing new station applications.

- *December 3, 2025, 6:00pm ET:* The Bureau will institute a freeze on all major change applications for Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations.
- *January 14, 2026, 6:00pm ET:* The Bureau will institute a freeze on all minor change applications for Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations.

Any applications filed during these temporary freezes will be dismissed and must be re-filed.

Phase 4: Resumption of Minor and Major Modification Filings and Commencement of Filing for New LPTV and TV Translator Stations

During Phase 4, the Commission will lift all freezes and allow filings indefinitely unless a new freeze is warranted.

- *January 21, 2026, 12:01 a.m. ET:* The Bureau will begin accepting all major and minor change applications on a first-come, first-served basis, in addition to applications for new LPTV and TV translator stations.

The applications will not be limited by geographic restrictions or other limitations beyond the existing parameters in parts 73 and 74 of the Commission's rules.

Application Process

When filing, stations must certify that they have sufficient funds to construct and operate the facility and provide reasonable assurance for the site specified in the application.

Class A stations must file major modification applications online using Form 2100, Schedule E. LPTV and TV translator applications for new stations or major changes must be filed online using FCC Form 2100, Schedule C. When applications are accepted for filing, a 30-day period (or 15-day period for mutually exclusive applications subject to competitive bidding) will begin, allowing members of the public to file petitions to deny opposing the applications.

Applicants must provide local public notice of their applications. Existing LPTV or TV translator stations must give local notice by posting online, either on the station's website or affiliated-entity's website, or on a publicly accessible, locally targeted website. Online notice must be posted for 30 consecutive days before the application is accepted for filing. Class A stations applying for major modifications must broadcast a public announcement with specific text six times between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. Monday through Friday during the four consecutive weeks before the application is accepted for filing.

Wiley's seasoned Media Practice has a deep bench of attorneys with extensive experience counseling Class A, LPTV, and TV translator stations on FCC applications and compliance. If you would like to file applications or have any questions, please contact the Wiley attorney who regularly handles your FCC matters or the authors of this alert.