

FCC Clarifies Obligations Under New FCC Broadcast Public Notice Requirements That Become Effective October 30, 2020

October 30, 2020

On October 30, 2020, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) issued a Public Notice clarifying certain aspects of its new rules governing the way that broadcasters must provide the public with notice of a variety of applications. As we explained previously, those new rules go into effect today, October 30, 2020.

Applications Covered by New Rules. The Public Notice clarifies that applicants and licensees must use the version of the public notice rules that was in effect on the date that an application was accepted for filing by the Commission. Thus, an application accepted for filing on October 27, 2020, is subject to the prior rules, but an application accepted for filing on October 30, 2020, is subject to the new rules.

Renewal Applications. Radio and television licensees who filed applications for renewal of their broadcast licenses that were due by October 1, 2020, should be in the process of making post-filing announcements. The Public Notice clarifies that those licensees should continue to make announcements for applications filed on October 1, 2020 under the prior version of the rules. The new rules apply to renewal applications filed December 1, 2020, and thereafter.

Website Link/Tab. The new rules also require that stations include a conspicuous “FCC Applications” link or tab on its website that will link to a separate page containing the full text of online public notices. The Public Notice clarifies that the FCC expects stations to take steps to add these links or tabs “expeditiously,” “but in no event later than when the licensee or applicant files an application requiring it to provide online notice.” The link or tab must remain on commercial

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stations' websites, even when a station does not have any pending applications that require online public notice, and the linked page must include the date it was last updated. If a station has no pending applications subject to the online public notice rules, the link or tab should direct to a page stating this fact.

Additional information on these rule changes was provided in a previous client alert which is available [here](#). If you have questions about the new requirements, please contact the Wiley attorney who regularly handles your station matters.