



Video Description

Background

Video description is audio-narrated descriptions of a television program's key visual elements. These descriptions are inserted into natural pauses in the program's dialogue. Video description makes TV programming more accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. On August 25, 2011, the FCC adopted rules to implement the video description provisions of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA) (www.fcc.gov/guides/21st-century-communications-and-video-accessibility-act-2010). These rules became effective **July 1, 2012**.

Availability of Video Description

FCC rules require local TV station affiliates of ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC located in the top 25 TV markets (see list below) to provide 50 hours per calendar quarter (about 4 hours per week) of video-described prime time and/or children's programming.

- Local TV stations in markets smaller than the top 25 also may provide video description. Check with your local TV stations.
- Many Public Broadcasting System (PBS) stations also provide video description on a number of programs. Check with your local PBS station.
- The requirement to provide video description is extended to local TV station affiliates of ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC located in the top 60 television markets beginning **July 1, 2015**.

The top 5 non-broadcast networks - Disney Channel, Nickelodeon, TBS, TNT, and USA - must provide 50 hours per calendar quarter (about 4 hours per week) of video-described prime time and/or children's programming.

- Subscription TV systems (offered over cable, satellite or the telephone network) with 50,000 or more subscribers must carry video description.
- Subscription TV systems with fewer than 50,000 subscribers also may provide video description. Check with your subscription TV provider.

How to Access Video Description

Video description is provided through the TV or set top box "secondary audio" feature, which some TV controls identify as "SAP" or "secondary audio program." The secondary audio may also be identified as a language feature, such as "Spanish" or "SPA," because it is also used to provide Spanish or other language translations of English language TV programs. Depending upon the program being viewed, when listening to the secondary audio, you may hear the primary audio with video description, Spanish or other language translation, a duplicate of the primary audio, or silence.



Your TV user manual may provide information about activating the secondary audio feature, or you may contact the customer service department where you bought the TV or the customer service department of the TV manufacturer for assistance. If you have a set top box for subscription TV service, you may contact your subscription TV provider for assistance in activating the secondary audio.

Learn More

Networks, broadcasters, and subscription TV systems may provide information about the availability of programs with video description through their websites and in program guides. Some program guides may use the symbol (D) to indicate that the program is video described.

The FCC provides links to these websites where they are available, and to other information on the FCC's video description web page at www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/video-description.

Top 25 TV Markets

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| 1 New York, NY | 14 Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL |
| 2 Los Angeles, CA | 15 Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN |
| 3 Chicago, IL | 16 Miami-Ft. Lauderdale, FL |
| 4 Philadelphia, PA | 17 Denver, CO |
| 5 Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX | 18 Cleveland-Akron, OH (Canton, OH) |
| 6 San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA | 19 Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne, FL |
| 7 Boston, MA (Manchester, NH) | 20 Sacramento-Stockton-Modesto, CA |
| 8 Atlanta, GA | 21 St. Louis, MO |
| 9 Washington, DC (Hagerstown, MD) | 22 Portland, OR |
| 10 Houston, TX | 23 Charlotte, NC |
| 11 Detroit, MI | 24 Pittsburgh, PA |
| 12 Phoenix, AZ (Prescott, AZ) | 25 Raleigh-Durham, NC (Fayetteville, NC) |
| 13 Seattle-Tacoma, WA | |

Filing a Complaint

You may file a complaint about an alleged violation of the video description requirements by using the online complaint form

(https://esupport.fcc.gov/ccmsforms/form2000.action?form_type=2000C). You may also file your complaint with the FCC's Consumer Center by calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY; faxing 1-866-418-0232; or writing to:

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554



What to Include in Your Complaint

If you do not use the online complaint form, your complaint should include the following information:

- Your name and address (you may also provide your phone number and e-mail address);
- The name, location (city and state), call letters, and network affiliation (if applicable) of the TV broadcast station; or the name and location (city and state) of your subscription TV provider, plus the name of the network that provided the programming;
- Enough information about the video description problem to demonstrate that the video programming distributor has violated or is violating the FCC's video description rules, including the date and time of the alleged violation, if applicable;
- Describe what you want the video programming distributor or provider to do to resolve your video description complaint;
- A statement that you tried to resolve the video description problem with the TV broadcast station or with your subscription TV provider; and
- Your preferred format or method of response to the complaint (such as letter, fax, telephone, e-mail, or some other method that would best accommodate you).

You can also provide the FCC with any other information you think would help the FCC process your complaint. Resolution of your complaint may be delayed if you do not provide all of the necessary information.

For More Information

For more information about FCC programs to promote access to telecommunications services for people with disabilities, visit the FCC's Disability Rights Office website at www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro. For information about other telecommunications issues, visit the FCC's Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau website at www.fcc.gov/consumer-governmental-affairs-bureau, or contact the FCC's Consumer Center using the information provided for filing a complaint.

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To receive information on this and other FCC consumer topics through the Commission's electronic subscriber service, visit www.fcc.gov/cgb/contacts/.

This document is for consumer education purposes only and is not intended to affect any proceedings or cases involving this subject matter or related issues.

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